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National strategy(ies)

There are several national strategies and programmes addressing sport, youth fitness and physical activity:


The programme defines priorities and measures that are in the public interest in the youth sector, among which are health and well-being. Led by the [Ministry of Education, Science and Sport](#) [2], it involves eight ministries and several agencies and institutes, among which are the following:

- [Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities](#) [3] (Ministrstvo za delo, družino, socialne zadeve in enake možnosti),
- [Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning](#) [4] (Ministrstvo za okolje in prostor),
- [National Institute of Public Health](#) [5] (Nacionalni inštitut za javno zdravje),
- [Slovenian Environmental Agency](#) [6] (Agencija RS za okolje),

Proposed measures focus on the health and well-being of young people with an emphasis on the
promotion of mental and sexual health, sports, physical activity and a healthy lifestyle, as well as the prevention and treatment of injuries, eating disorders, addiction and drug abuse. Two specific target groups are identified: Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) and Roma youth. The action plan (Izvedbeni načrt Resolucije o nacionalnem programu za mladino 2013–2022 za leti 2016 in 2017 [8]) for the implementation of measures was prepared for the years 2016 and 2017. Monitoring and evaluation of the programme is the responsibility of the Office of RS for Youth.

The National Programme for Youth 2013–2022 (Resolucija o Nacionalnem programu za mladino 2013–2022 [11]) foresees several priority measures and their indicators:

**Objective: Promoting regular physical activity, balanced nutrition and maintenance of the recommended body weight among young people (15–29 years).**

i. ensuring systematic conditions for regular physical activity. Indicator: proportion of young people who are regularly physically active. Between 2006 and 2014, there was a significant increase in the proportion of adolescents who were active at least two to three times a week in their leisure time.


The programme aims to address the physical activity habits of the Slovenian population from the early years of life to old age, as well as to promote daily physical activity. Led by the Ministry of Health [10], it involves 16 ministries or administrative agencies and institutes, in addition to non-governmental organizations and professional associations. Among those are the following:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Sport,
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food [11] (Ministrstvo za kmetijstvo, gozdarstvo in prehrano),
- Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning [4],
- Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities [3],
- National Institute of Public Health [5].

Proposed measures include:

- commitment to ensuring the availability of green open spaces for recreation and organized sports activities, especially for socially disadvantaged groups;
- promotion of nature as a space for recreation and physical activity;
- promotion of active transport;
- measures to ensure the affordability of high-quality sports and HEPA programmes, financed from public funds;
- cooperation among the health, education and social services sectors and sports clubs and local communities in increasing the physical activity levels of children, especially children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.
No specific target group has been identified within the youth population. The action plan (*Akcijski načrt za izvajanje Resolucije o nacionalnem programu o prehrani in telesni dejavnosti za zdravje 2015–2025 do leta 2018*) was prepared for the implementation of specific measures, along with monitoring and evaluation, for the period up to 2018.


   Led by the *Ministry of Education, Science and Sport* [2], it involves numerous administrative agencies and institutes, in addition to non-governmental organizations and professional associations. Among these are the following:

   - Ministry of Health,
   - *Ministry of Infrastructure* [14] (Ministrstvo za infrastrukturo),
   - *Faculty of Sport of University of Ljubljana* [15],
   - National Institute for Public Health.

   Implemented on the basis of the action plan (*Izvedbeni načrt nacionalnega programa športa v Republiki Sloveniji 2014–2023*), the main objective of this programme is to increase the share of the population active in sports. It contains measures such as support to public entities implementing the programme (schools included) and other initiatives concerning youth (e.g. physical education in formal education, sports in extracurricular activities and physical education of children and youth with special needs). The programme identifies special-needs pupils and students as a specific target group and provides special measures.


   Led by the Ministry of Health, it involves eight ministries and two administrative agencies and institutes. It is implemented on the grounds of the action plan (*Akcijski načrt za izvajanje strategije Republike Slovenije za zdravje otrok v povezavi z okoljem 2012–2020*). The framework is set up until 2020. One of the four main topics covered in this strategy is reducing the problem of obesity and injuries by providing a safe environment for physical activity and healthy nutrition.

**Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people**

The National Programme of Sports of the Republic of Slovenia 2014–2023 (*Nacionalni program športa v Republiki Sloveniji 2014–2023*) provides general framework for the promotion and support of sport and physical activity. The National Programme was followed by an action plan with a timeframe to 2020 (*Izvedbeni načrt Nacionalnega programa športa v Republiki Sloveniji 2014-2023*).
The sub-sections on sport programs, sport events and the promotion of sport, as well as on social and environmental responsibility in sport, contain various measures with the aim of promoting and supporting sport activities. Below, some of the aims provided in the programme are listed:

1. ensure at least one hour of quality guided sports exercises daily for everyone in the group of children and youth;
2. update and increase the quality and attractiveness of existing leisure programs for children’s and young people’s sports education;
3. provide at least two hours of free, quality guided leisure activities per week for pupils and high school students;
4. encourage the integration of schools and sport, charity and other associations on the local level for the implementation of mobile programmes for children and youth with special needs;
5. update and increase the quality and attractiveness of affordable sports activities in universities’ extracurricular activities;
6. develop a national campaign to promote sports behaviour;
7. promote the ambassador for sport, tolerance and fair play;
8. have a national campaign to promote regular sporting, more exercise, healthful eating and the maintenance of a healthy living environment.

The programme provides specific measures aimed at monitoring and evaluating activities.

The following sources of public funding are available for the national programme:

1. local authorities (where activities take place).
2. government ministries:
   - Ministry of Education, Science and Sport [2],
   - Ministry of Finance [20],
   - Ministry of Defence [21],
   - Ministry for Economic Development and Technology [22],
   - Ministry of the Interior [23].
3. Sport Foundation (Fundacija za šport [24]).
4. Foundation for financing disability and impairment organisations (Fundacija za financiranje invalidskih in humanitarnih organizacij [25]).
5. European structural funds.

The annual sports program defines activities and projects for the implementation of national programme measures and the extent of public funds. The annual sports program 2017 (Letni program športa 2017 [26]) envisages public funding in the range of 5.065.772 EUR.

Several other initiatives promote and support sport and physical activity among young people:

1. Let's Learn Swimming (Naučimo se plavati [27]), which has existed since 1994. The main purpose of this programme is to increase the number of swimmers and improve the swimming
abilities of children and young people through swimming courses and swimming tests. Data obtained from the programme are used annually for a national-level analysis of swimming knowledge.

1. Young Mountain Hiker (Mladi planinec [28]), which has existed since 1969. It directs youth toward healthy living in nature by familiarizing them with the basics of mountaineering activities and safety measures in the mountains.

The programmes listed above follow several EU physical activity guidelines.

**Physical education in schools**

It is mandatory for primary schools to provide 2–3 lessons (45 minutes each) of physical education (PE) per week. In secondary schools, it is mandatory to provide 1–3 lessons (45 minutes each) per week.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports runs a national scheme for after-school HEPA promotion entitled Healthy Lifestyle (Zdrav življenjski slog [30]). The aim of the project is to encourage primary school children to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The programme currently reaches 20–30% of the primary school population and provides a further five hours of physical activity per week on top of the mandatory PE lessons during school hours. The National Programme for Nutrition and HEPA 2015–2025, implemented in 2015, also promotes active travel to school.

The action plan for national programme envisages promotion of extracurricular activities in the field of sport and is backed by the following measures:

1. impacting the content and organizational update of sports programmes and promoting their implementation at the place of study,
2. co-financing year-round sports programmes offering an important health effect at the place of study,
3. co-financing sports events at the university and national level that have a high health impact,
4. promoting lower pricing for sports services and free programmes for students.

Regarding higher education, since the implementation of Bologna Process, physical education has
been missing from the curricula. It should be noted that the action plan for the National programme for Youth 2016–2017 envisages the following measure: repositioning sports education as a compulsory subject in the first year of all study programmes.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport recommends that schools implement physical activities during school breaks called ‘recreational breaks’. Some of the activities that take place are the following:

1. fit break/active breaks
   a. fit breaks aim to:
      i. satisfy the need for games, happiness, joy;
      ii. reduce fatigue and the negative consequences of sitting;
      iii. relax and renew mental energy;
      iv. influence motivation to work and support easier and better work;
      v. create a relaxed atmosphere;
      vi. promote a healthy life in the future.
   b. a fit break usually comprises:
      i. relay competitions,
      ii. elementary games,
      iii. ball games,
      iv. balloon games,
      v. games with a string,
      vi. games with stones,
      vii. fun games.

1. interesting sport activities
   a. This comprises activities that try to ensure the daily sports exercise of children, upgrade to compulsory school sports education or introduce other sport that are among the leisure sports on offer.

1. sport competitions
   a. School sport competitions are seen as an important link between school sports education and students’ leisure activities.
   b. Presenting the overcoming obstacles as a challenge (which is also a competition) is important for a child’s life, and at the same time, it is important for his or her healthy personality development. An appropriate number of requirements and limitations are urgently required.
   c. The basic purposes of school competitions are cooperation, mutual companionship and comparing knowledge. By encouraging appropriate competitiveness and cooperation, healthy rivalry, respect for sporting behaviour, tolerance and acceptance of difference, positive behavioural patterns are formed among pupils.

1. sport programmes
   a. Detailed information is available in the sub-section ‘Promoting and supporting sport and
Collaboration and partnerships

The National Programme of Sport in the Republic of Slovenia 2014–2023 (Nacionalni program športa v Republiki Sloveniji 2014–2023 [13]) envisages collaboration and partnership among several institutions and stakeholders throughout the strategy. However, emphasis is placed on the formation of partnerships among schools, sport associations, charity organisations and other associations at the local level regarding children and youth with special needs. To this end, measures under sub-section 6.1.3 of the action plan (Akciji načrt za izvajanje strategije Republike Slovenije za zdravje otrok v povezavi z okoljem 2012–2020 [19]) were implemented.